



Bitterroot National Forest

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Cooler Temperatures Allow for Reduction of Fire Restrictions”

Hamilton, Montana, September 14, 2006 — Cooler temperatures and light showers throughout much of western Montana have reduced fire danger and Bitterroot National Forest officials are thus able to reduce the degree of fire restrictions for recreationists, wood cutters and other Forest visitors. Beginning early Friday morning, September 15th, Stage I fire restrictions will be in effect.

Specifically at Stage 1, campfires and use of charcoal briquettes will only be allowed in developed recreation sites or campgrounds, and only in the metal or concrete fire rings provided at the site. Fires within rock fire rings are NOT permitted. The public can continue to use gas stoves fueled solely by liquid fuel or LPG fuels outside of developed recreation sites during Stage 1 restrictions. In addition to the campfire restrictions, smoking is prohibited except within buildings, vehicles, developed recreation sites, or while stopped in an area that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials for at least three feet in diameter.

The Gash Creek Fire burned actively in the headwaters of the Sweathouse Creek drainage earlier this week, and has grown to approximately 8500 acres in size. Rain has decreased fire activity during the past day and a half, with nearly 0.15 inches of rain falling Thursday morning. Hans Smith's Type III team turned management of the fire back to the Stevensville Ranger District. District firefighters continue to patrol, mopup and secure lines around the fire.

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